



Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RAF trailblazers past and present meet at Royal Star & Garter

Pioneering RAF servicewomen past and present have met at a High Wycombe care home.

Air Marshal Clare Walton CB KHP, the most senior ranking woman in the Air Force, met resident Cynthia Fowler, the first female RAF Air Commodore, when she visited the Royal Star & Garter care home.

During her visit to the Home, AM Walton also met other residents, including senior ranking RAF veteran Air Marshal (Ret'd) Sir Michael Simmons.



Air Marshal Clare Walton CB KHP talks to High Wycombe resident Cynthia, who was the first female Air Commodore in the RAF

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia. The charity has also launched new services to reach out into the community.

During her visit on 28 March, AM Walton was given a tour of the Home by the Royal Star & Garter Chair, Major General Tim Tyler, Chief Executive Andy Cole, and Home Manager Reggie Ballos. She chatted to residents, saw them put through their paces in the Home's in-house Physiotherapy room, and spoke to staff.

Among the veterans she met was Cynthia, who served in the RAF for 36 years before retiring in 2000. She had risen through the ranks and was commissioned as a Flying Officer in 1969. A number of overseas tours followed before she was promoted to Squadron Leader in 1979, and that same year she started working at the Ministry of Defence. Promotion to Group Captain brought with it the post of Deputy Director WRAF and, as the role changed, she became responsible for service-wide welfare just as the first Gulf War started. In 1995, Cynthia became an Air Commodore. Initially she served at Personnel and Training Command with responsibility for general education and physical training and then, from 1996, as Director of Recruiting and Selection. Her career highlights include serving as Station Commander at RAF Hillingdon from



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1991-94. Later, she served as the Patron of the WAAF WRAF RAF(W) Association, from 2003-2018.

AM Walton also spent time with Sir Michael, who also reached the rank of Air Marshal, and was the first RAF pilot to fly the Tornado aircraft.

AM Walton is Director General Defence Medical Services (DMS), in charge of the tri-Service medical services. Also joining her during the Royal Star & Garter visit was Lieutenant Colonel Alasdair Hempenstall, Military Assist to Director General DMS, and Claire Sanders, Head of DMS People and Workforce.



Air Marshal Clare Walton CB KHP shakes hands with Sir Michael Simmons, who also rose to the rank of Air Marshal during his time in the RAF

Afterwards, AM Walton said: "It was a pleasure to visit Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe and meet some of the residents and team who work there. I was genuinely impressed by the thought and attention that has clearly gone into the design and decoration of this Home, it is entirely fitting to the provision of care to our veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia."



Royal Star & Garter Physio Louis works with residents Yvonne and Ken, while Air Marshal Clare Walton CB KHP watches on

Royal Star & Garter Chief Executive Andy Cole said: "It was a privilege to show Air Marshal Walton around our Home, so she could see the outstanding care we provide and meet some of the veterans who live here. AM Walton and Cynthia are both hugely inspiring figures, and have served their country with great distinction. We are delighted that they were able to meet and chat about the Royal Air Force at Royal Star & Garter."

Royal Star & Garter is welcoming new residents. For more information on this, to work at the Home, or learn about the new services being provided, go to www.starandgarter.org

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About Royal Star & Garter

Our charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

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Website: www.starandgarter.org



Royal Star & Garter
is a member of the
National Care Forum